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**Technology, Energy & Communications  
Committee**

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**SSB 5290**

**Brief Description:** Concerning requests made by a party relating to gas or electrical company discounts for low-income senior customers and low-income customers.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Environment, Water & Energy (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Brown, Fraser, Kauffman, McAuliffe, Shin, Murray, Eide, Keiser, Berkey and Regala).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows other parties to a general rate case proceeding, in addition to an electrical or gas company, to request changes to a gas or electric utility's program for low-income senior customers and low-income customers.

**Hearing Date:** 3/11/09

**Staff:** Scott Richards (786-7156)

**Background:**

Utilities and Transportation Commission.

The Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) regulates in the public interest the rates, services, facilities, and practices of all persons engaging within this state in the business of supplying any utility service or commodity to the public for compensation.

Low-Income Programs.

Upon request by an electrical or gas company, the UTC may approve rates, charges, services, or physical facilities at a discount for low-income senior customers and low-income customers. Expenses and lost revenues as a result of these discounts are included in the company's cost of service and recovered in rates to other customers.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Under current law, only a gas or electric utility may initiate a request to approve or change a low-income program. The utility may make the request as part of a general rate proceeding.

**Summary of Bill:**

A party to a general rate case proceeding, in addition to an electrical and a gas company, may request that UTC approve rates, charges, services, or physical facilities at a discount for low-income senior customers and low-income customers.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.